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Editorial

ORGANIZATION AND MAN POWER

A few weeks ago Major-General Goethals read a scholarly paper on "Engineering as a Profession" before the students of a New England college. It was an excellent address, but it aroused no enthusiasm. Then, without notes, he proceeded, complying with a request to this effect, to talk informally on the question, "What built the Panama Canal?" To this the audience listened eagerly and gave the heartiest applause.

The speaker briefly described the ineffectiveness of the early commissions, which is only too well known, and then he gave the history of the appointment of the last commission, of which he himself was really the dictator. To tell the story in full is not the purpose of this editorial, for it would, of course, be quite out of place here. In general, however, it seems to me that "What built the Panama Canal?" will be likewise most helpful to our cause, that is, organization and man power. To organize the many thousands of men, who were devoting at least a part of their lives to the building of the canal required a far-seeing vision and a deep knowledge of human nature. General Goethals, who understood most minutely the objects to be gained, simply told the officers and men *what* they were to accomplish, leaving the solving of details to them. He also worked upon their pride, and he developed a tremendous rivalry among the various "gangs" to see which could remove each day, the greatest number of cubic yards of earth or rock. Every man, and even the most humble office boy, was possessed

of the idea that *he* was building the Panama Canal! Man power could not be more highly developed. The result is known to all. The canal was opened long before the date fixed by the law and, as far as the workers were concerned, it might have been opened long before it was.

Among the teachers of Greek and Latin in this country the spirit of organization should prevail far more widely than it does, but this subject already has been thoroughly treated in these pages. It is strange that even at this late day so many teachers are outside of our four associations. Every Greek and Latin teacher, however young or old he may be, should realize that he owes it to the cause and to himself to join the association that covers his particular part of the country. His own personal interest, if nothing else, should lead him to join, in order that he may get ideas and suggestions which will have a direct bearing upon his own work by giving him command of his subject and prestige with his classes. If anyone thinks that there is nothing left for him to learn, he ought to know enough to realize that the end of all things as far as he is concerned, has come. His period of effective service is over. The great difficulty in all this is that words to this effect do not reach those without the fold. Every one of our members, therefore, as far as in him lies, should become a missionary in the cause and secure the largest possible number of new members.

As to "man power," the principles of Major-General Goethals in dealing with the diggers of the canal are surely the only correct ones. It does not matter *how* the thing is done. That must be left to the individual. The real end to be attained is to *teach Greek*, or *Latin*, to make sure that the students possess a knowledge of the subject commensurate with the time they have spent upon it. (Perhaps they do, and doubtless that is often one of our troubles!)

We should recognize the fact that the *method* is the man himself. A Dr. Rouse may work miracles with the so-called direct method, but there are few Dr. Rouses in the world, as we have at last come to agree. In less efficient hands this method can lead only to disaster, and it is well that the attempt to enforce its general use has now apparently been abandoned. In spite of this, the movement has, without doubt, been a great benefit to us. A little of

the direct method now and then serves to enliven our classes and this modicum is within the abilities of any teacher. That the rigid employment of this method would require more years than our students have at their disposal seems beyond dispute.

I hope that the time will never come when teachers may not be encouraged to describe at our meetings and in our magazines the many devices, large or small, that they have found of service. We can all derive both pleasure and profit from hearing, or reading, these papers. Especially young teachers, just at the beginning of their careers, would gain much from this exchange of ideas. It is, therefore, the duty of each and every one of us to make them see that they cannot afford to miss these opportunities.

At this stage in the world's history we do not need to be told that *man power* is the resultant force of *organization*.

M. N. W.

DR FLEXNER'S FALLACIES

We cannot but be glad that others besides those directly interested in classical studies are recognizing and pointing out the fallacies and the utterly unscientific and prejudiced (perhaps unscientific because prejudiced) spirit in which Dr. Flexner has undertaken the organization of his boasted and much heralded "modern school." If the subsequent work of this school proves to be as one-sided and unintelligent as its promoter's announcement and defense of it, we cannot hope that the cause of sound education will be very much advanced thereby. On the contrary, a school founded on baseless assumption and buttressed on prejudice cannot do other than harm to real education, for the first principle of all progress in this field has always been, and must still be, the open mind.

We are sure our readers generally will be much heartened by the following editorial reprinted from the *Springfield Weekly Republican* of February 15. We value this utterance the more because this is one of the most sanely conservative periodicals in the country, is committed to neither side of the controversy, and cannot possibly, therefore, be charged with special pleading.